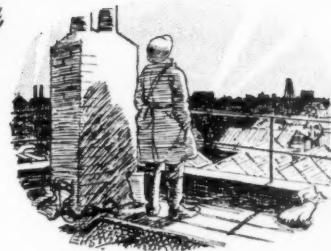


POUNCE

OR
THE LONDON CHARIVARI



Vol. CCI No. 5248

October 8 1941

Charivaria

In the event of Germany's declaring peace on Turkey Dr. GOEBBELS has made adequate broadcasting arrangements for the sinking of the Turkish Fleet.

A German General on the Russian front has an Italian batman. And many an Italian at home has found it necessary to polish up his German.



The FUEHRER is said to be losing weight. All his doubles are dieting to synchronize.

The Army's help in gathering in the harvest was much appreciated, says a farmer. Sergeant-majors soon got the idea that it wasn't necessary for the stooks to parade in three ranks.

An astrologer has published his Reminiscences. It's a disappointing volume—all written in the past tense.

A Berlin paper says that Germany will have defeated Britain by the middle of next summer. The Germans are optimistic — particularly in their naïve confidence that we shall have a summer.

Aiming Low

"Intelligence tests for the selection of Army officers and the grading of recruits for training purposes are recommended by the Select Committee on National Expenditure in a report dealing with the Army services issued to-day as a White Paper.

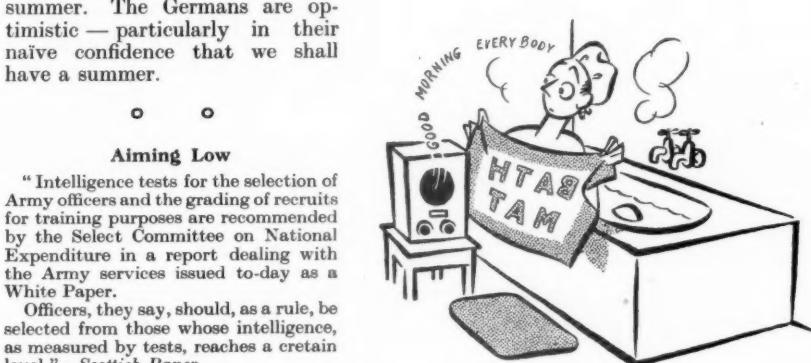
Officers, they say, should, as a rule, be selected from those whose intelligence, as measured by tests, reaches a certain level."—*Scottish Paper*.

A defendant recently complained that although a fine of only £1 was imposed when a policeman was struck, he had to pay as much as £3 for merely striking a match.



Dr. LEY recently declared that German children no longer believe in fairies. Not since they have seen newspaper pictures of Dr. GOEBBELS and Herr HIMMLER.

A plain-clothes police officer arrested some gamblers in a railway carriage. He was pressed to take part in a game and then played his identity card.



A gentleman farmer writes from Essex that mosquitoes have been very troublesome lately and have bitten his ankles severely. We thought gentlemen farmers wore spats.

"A similar story can be told of next Monday's championship fight at the Royal Albert Hall, London, between Ernie Roderick and Arthur Danahar, for which the admission charges begin at 10s., or rather one should say 'begun' . . ."—*Daily Paper*.

Let's be *really* refined and say "commenced."

Many people have radio sets in their bathrooms. This never seems to embarrass our imperturbable announcers.

From the Other Side

WHENEVER I take up a new book about "Nazi Germany as I Knew It"—and from a tableful of new books it is not very easy to take up anything else—I first of all hunt eagerly for the pages which describe the diet, the daily habits, the recreations and the squabbings of the principal crooks. The Leader's light breakfast of milk and mouthfuls of carpet and chocolate éclairs; Goering's shouts of laughter as he plays with his toy electric train; Himmler the mild-mannered schoolmaster, ousting the evil-tongued Goebbels or the vainglorious Ribbentrop from third place by his sheer business efficiency in bumping off innocent men; I have read of them before, and I read of them again, as I should if publishers brought out a new life of Seddon, a new biography of Mr. Charles Peace.

There is not much that is new to me about these matters in the Diary of Mr. William Shirer*, who broadcast from Berlin to America until the end of 1940, but he makes many statements that concern us perhaps more nearly about the thing that is usually spoken of as "the German war-machine." He writes as a benevolent neutral, putting down in his diary what he believes to be the strong and weak points of both sides, apart from his own bias which makes him rejoice when his office at Berlin is being heavily bombed by the R.A.F. and annoyed with us when it is not.

But he has no rose-coloured illusions (as some of us still have) about the possibility of breaking down Nazism by propaganda, since Nazism, he sees, is a religion and Hitler is a god enthroned. He isn't "the brains of the German army" (this anatomical award is given to General Halder), but it has to be remembered that the limbs and arteries of the German army are by this time thoroughly Nazified.

"The commanding officers . . . are for the most part mere youngsters compared to the French generals we have seen . . . More than one not yet forty, most of them in the forties . . . they have the characteristics of youth . . . General von Reichenau, Commander of a whole army in Poland, was first to cross the Vistula River. He swam it. The Commander of a few hundred parachutists at Rotterdam was a general, who took his chances with the lieutenants and privates, and was in fact severely wounded. All the big German tank attacks were led in person by commanding generals."

In fact if you are going to risk your generals' lives in this way they must needs be fairly young. There would not have been enough men of the ordinary age of a French general to replace the casualties, and Mr. Shirer says of the French commanders: "They strike you as civilized, intellectual, frail, ailing old men, who stopped thinking new thoughts twenty years ago and have taken no physical exercise in the last ten years."

All this might have been expected, but there is a good deal more, less often hinted at, behind. "Few people who have not seen it in action realize how different this army is from the one sent . . . into Belgium and France in 1914. The old Prussian goosestep, the heel-clicking . . . are still there. But the great gulf between officers and men is gone in this war . . . They feel like members of one great family . . . German privates salute each other exactly as they salute officers . . . In cafés, restaurants, dining-rooms, officers and men off duty sit at the same table and converse as men to men . . . In Paris I recall a colonel who was treating a dozen privates to an excellent lunch in a little

Basque restaurant off the Avenue de l'Opéra. When lunch was over he drew, with all the care of a loving father, a plan for them to visit the sights of Paris . . . Hitler himself has drawn up detailed instructions for German officers about taking an interest in the personal problems of their men . . ."

So you would not be likely to see in this war, as I have seen in the last, a German lieutenant standing alone and vainly trying to summon reinforcements with his sword; and it seems that in setting themselves above all the laws of decency and humanity the Nazified army has really created some kind of new equality in its own ranks. Dog does not even bark too loudly at dog.

But if they understood each other (and the French), they did not, it seems, understand us. Mr. Shirer's description of "The Battle of Britain" as seen from the enemy's camp is curious. He says that what Goering and all the other Germans were incapable of grasping was that "the British were prepared to see their cities bombed and destroyed before they would risk *all* of their planes in a few great battles to defend them. To the British this was mere common sense . . . to the German mind it was incomprehensible."

They could only destroy our Air Force by getting it all up into the air, for the machines were far too well and widely scattered to be destroyed on the ground. And they couldn't get it all up into the air. They also grumbled to him that the British fighters "fled whenever they saw a German fighter" and (by this act of cowardice) on each of three days shot down some 175 to 200 of their planes, mostly bombers, and crippled probably half as many more! They don't seem to have told him about radio-location.

One would like to know a little more about civilian morale, though of course it is nine months or more since Mr. Shirer went away, and things may be different now. "Not one German in ten is reading a newspaper," he writes on October 8th, 1940, when not one Englishman in ten wasn't reading two. The story-about-town, he tells us, is that the average Berliner, when he buys his ten-pfennig evening paper, says to the newsboy "Give me ten pfennigs' worth of reprisals," and radio news is not considered very much more trustworthy. "I have noticed more than one German shut off a news broadcast after the first couple of minutes with that expressive Berlin exclamation 'Oh, Quatsch!' . . ." There does not, by the way, seem to be any precise English word for Quatsch . . .

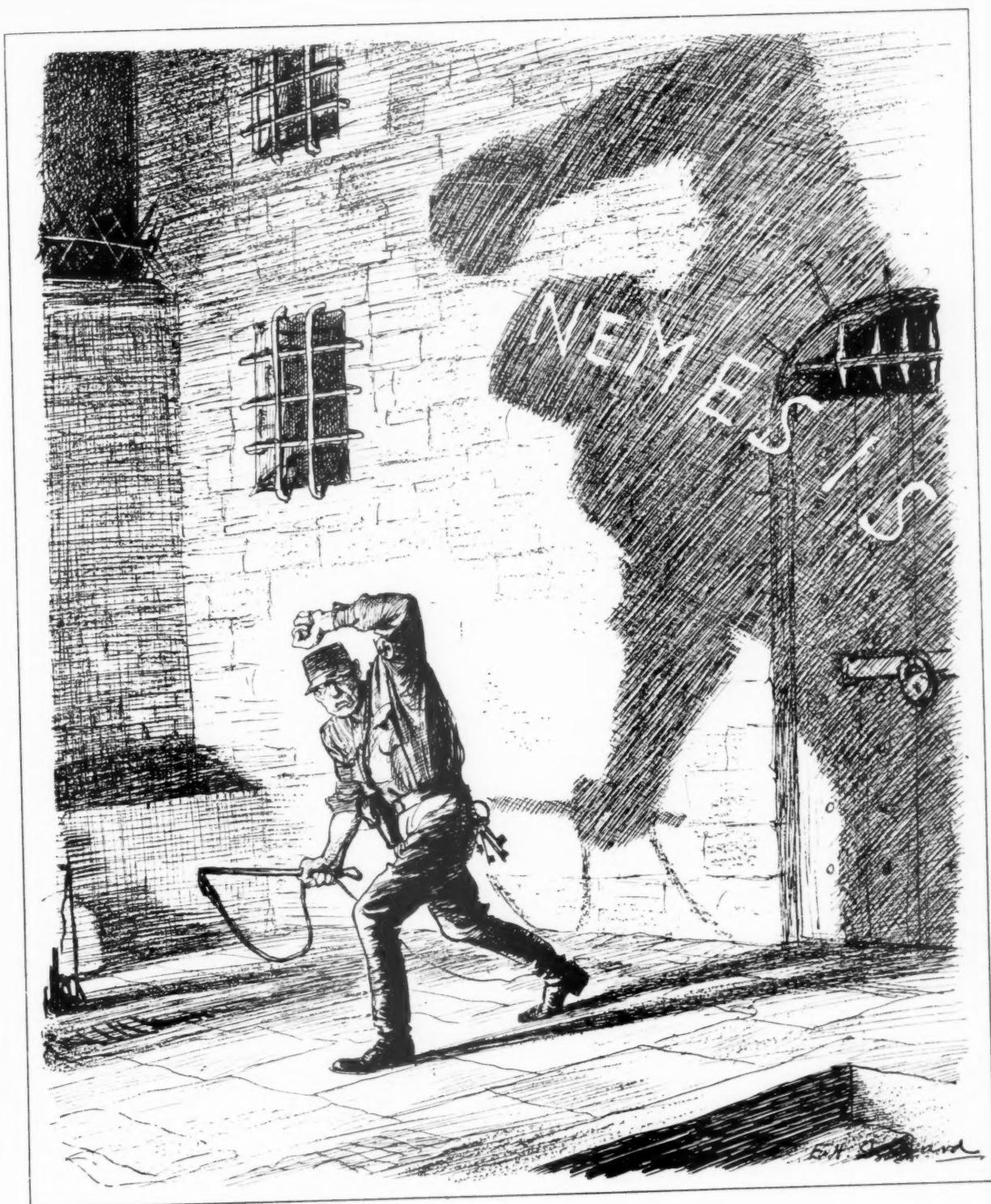
In one way at least, which I anticipated long ago, Hitler had made certain of preventing civilian morale from entire collapse. It is only a beginning but I expect it will spread further. Incurable lunatics and also, it seems, the very old are apt to be put quietly away, probably because lunatics and invalids (though not very numerous themselves) have to be looked after by quite a large staff of able-bodied women and men.

Mr. Shirer, at any rate, thinks that Hitler would rather let the whole of subject Europe die of starvation than allow a single Nazi to lack or suffer hunger, and he might easily determine at any time, if he has not already, on some quicker and more merciful way of eliminating those whom the New Order does not need.

Altogether I am not disabused by this book of my notion that, however good-natured individual Germans may be, on the war-path they behave like ants; and if any tongue can convert them to sweet reasonableness it must be that of an ant-eater.

EVOE.

* William L. Shirer's *Berlin Diary* (Hamish Hamilton).



SHADOWED

they to be "Right Honourable" or something?

Lords Justices (that's the Court of Appeal) are "Right Honourable."

Oh!—But why all this display of knowledge?

Well, I like these old titles and distinctions myself. And the other day I was wondering, why don't we have the same sort of thing in the Services?

I see. They do have a touch of it in Parliament, don't they?

Yes. Every Lord is "Noble" and every Member of the Commons is "Honourable." If an M.P. is a soldier or sailor he's "Honourable and Gallant." And if he's a K.C.—or, some say, a barrister—he's "Honourable and Learned."

What about solicitors?

I don't think they're "learned." But I'm not sure.

Tough luck! But I agree with you about the Services. They ought to be in this. How would you fix a Field-Marshal, or an Admiral of the Fleet?

Well, I suppose they rank with an Archbishop. So Sir Roger Keyes would be "His Gallantry the Most Courageous"—

That doesn't leave much for the Army.

Well then, "His Gallantry the Most Marine Admiral of the Fleet," etcetera. A Rear-Admiral would be "Extremely Marine," a Captain "Very Marine," and so on.

What about a Commodore?

A Commodore, I feel, should be something special, like an Archdeacon. "Right Seaworthy," perhaps.

For a Field-Marshal I suggest "His Fortitude."

"His Fortitude the Most Smart"? All right. A General would be "Extremely Smart," a Colonel "Very Smart," and a Major—

"Fairly Smart."

The R.A.F. is going to be more difficult.

Who's top?

Air Chief Marshal, I think.

"His Intrepidity the Most Undaunted"?

Not bad. But too long. He'd be halfway to America before you got it out. "The Quite Fearless Flight Commander" sounds well, I think.

Or "The Right Resolute Squadron-Leader."

Good. Now what can we do for the Civil Service?

Nothing disrespectful, I hope.

Certainly not. It's all very well to run down the Civil Service as we all love doing. But the fact remains that almost everything the country does is done by or through the Civil Service—

and the country does manage to get quite a lot done.

All right. But don't overdo it. What would you suggest for a Permanent Under-Secretary?

He's top chap, is he?

I think so—under the political chaps.

Well, then, he ranks with Archbishops or Field-Marshal.

Oh, no. After all, there are about thirty full-size Government Departments. You can't have thirty Archbishops.

True. Perhaps we'd better rank them with Bishops and Generals. "Right Something-or-other."

"Right Industrious"?

No. I don't say they're not, but it isn't good.

"Right Busy"? "Right Obstinate"? "Very Painstaking"? "Most Discreet"?

No. I've got it. "The Right Meticulous the Permanent Under-Secretary for So-and-so."

Good. And, for once, "meticulous" is right.

A Deputy Under-Secretary would be "The Extremely Careful," and an ordinary first-class fellow "The Rather Cautious."

What would you call the Chairman of the London Passenger Transport Board?

"The Most Mobile the Lord Chairman," etcetera.

And the Director-General of the B.C.?

I think he ranks with Archbishops, don't you?

All right. How about "His Gaiety the Most Enlightening"?

By the way, talking of names, what is all this nonsense about an Inter-Allied Conference?

What's that?

Well, the representatives of our sixteen Allies met in conference at St. James's Palace: and, according to all the papers I've seen, the official name was "The Inter-Allied Conference."

Well?

Well, why the "inter"? Why not "Conference of Allies"?

I dunno. You say "inter-national," don't you? Why not "inter-allied"?

Because it's ugly and quite unnecessary. We called it "League of Nations"—not "Inter-national League." It was better—and clearer.

What about Inter-State cricket matches in Australia?

That's all right, because the "inter" tells you that the matches are *between* two States. But then the fools went on to talk about an "Inter-Imperial Conference"—do you remember?—which could only mean a conference between two *empires*. And they didn't

mean that at all—they simply meant an Imperial conference.

It's all very difficult.

It isn't difficult at all—if only certain people could make up their minds either not to use Latin at all, or to take the trouble to use it correctly.

A chap in the Telegraph the other day was complaining about Latin at Oxford.

Yes. I saw that. A fantastic letter. It was headed "University Handicaps—Latin for Science Students . . ."

I should have thought they were just the chaps who ought to have it.

Exactly. The scientists ooze Latin and Greek. They can't move a foot or finger without using Latin. It is the "scientists" who have imported more Latin (and Greek) words into our life and language than anyone else.

Except the lawyers?

No. The lawyers keep on using the old Latin words. But they're not constantly imposing new ones on us, like the "scientists." Anyhow, this chap was complaining that a young scientist was elected to an open scholarship at an Oxford college in March. And "instead of quietly applying himself during the ensuing six months to the further preparation for his course at the University, he is obliged to spend the time in obtaining sufficient knowledge of the vagaries of the Latin language to enable him to attain the required standard in that subject in the Responsions examination"! It's like complaining that a soldier has to learn arms drill before he's promoted to corporal.

You mean that a spot of Latin is just as much part of the preparation for his course as—as a lot of other things?

Of course! If he was going in for plumbing or stockbroking the boy might have some cause to complain—though not much, because a little Latin does everybody good. But a scientist! Yet this fellow in the *Telegraph* has the nerve to talk about "the mediæval regulations pertaining to admission to some of our universities."

Golly!

Golly, indeed! And, by the way, you'll observe that every word of more than one syllable in that biting phrase is—

What?

A Latin word.

A. P. H.

○ ○

Exclusive

"The Quisling premier, Pavelitch, though no coward and rather a swashbuckling gangster type, scarcely ever ventures out alone, and then only with a powerful body-guard."—*Daily Paper*.

You Mark My Words.

IT is now several weeks since I read in an article by Mr. G. W. Stonier in *The New Statesman and Nation* the following pronouncement, which ever since I have been from time to time turning over in what I like to call my mind:

"One test of the good writer is this: open the dictionary before him at any page and he will tell you at once which among several hundred words are words especially his."

It wasn't till to-day that I audaciously tried this experiment on myself, the only writer I know who would take it calmly, and if it is without enthusiasm that I now report the result you yourself must guess why, because I'll be doggoned if I admit it.

I prefer to believe that I chose too big a dictionary. Plunging at random with a cry of delight (or something) into the second massive volume of the Shorter Oxford, I found myself gaspingly stuck with page 1732, *Rheumy* to *Rhombus* (not counting the last two lines of *Rheumatoid*): thirty-eight main entries and a lot of little subsidiary ones like *Rhinoceros auk* and *Rhizotaxy*. I find great difficulty in establishing ownership of a single one of these, and a good many of them, if they were especially mine, I should seize the first opportunity to get rid of.

Even if we take the double-page spread and admit the thirty main entries on page 1733 (*Rhonchus* [also *ronchus*] to *Riata*) we don't, I think, get much help. True, this lot contains both *Rhyme* and *Rhythm*, not to mention *Rhus* (a genus of shrubs and trees, mostly poisonous, especially abundant at the Cape of Good Hope); but what does that prove? I don't know anybody at the Cape of Good Hope. I don't even collect stamps.

The best word on page 1732 I believe to be *Rhombohedron*. I would not say that this is especially mine, and I have no wish to claim it, for I know it would be more trouble than it would be worth. I should certainly have to spend half my time explaining to muddle-witted acquaintances who saw me out with it (on my tricycle) that it had nothing whatever to do with *Rhododendron*. Indeed, I know of some people who would undoubtedly contend that it really was *Rhododendron* only slightly disguised by a couple of

TO READERS OF PUNCH OVERSEAS LONDON CALLING

Wherever you may be, overseas, London calls you daily on the radio with the news from Britain—truthful, up-to-the-minute. The times and wave-lengths for your own region are specially chosen, and full details of all forthcoming overseas programmes in English are transmitted from London, every Sunday morning, by special Morse Service to the British authorities nearest to you.

This information is freely available to the Press, and is supplied to local papers on request. Editors are not always aware of this English programme service, and if you cannot find the British programmes in the papers you read, they will be interested to know that you would like to see them—and how easily they can be obtained.

THEN PLEASE LISTEN—TO LONDON,
AND THE VOICE OF FREEDOM.

perfectly natural spelling mistakes. (These people will have read it as *Rhododendron* here, and are now baffled by the whole thing.) I don't know the working of what one might call the mechanics of word-acquisition, but I suggest that a week or two of this would have the effect of making me the owner of the word *Rhododendron* too, which I don't want. Mr. Middleton can have it, or some one of the numerous people who think it ends in *r-u-m*.

For the word *Rhinencephalon*, meaning the olfactory lobe of the brain, I have a great respect, but no proprietary feeling. It is possible that I might with perseverance cultivate one, but I see no reason why I should take any such trouble; besides, that is obviously not what Mr. Stonier meant. The inner certainty that the word is one's own has to be there already, rare and inexplicable like a taste for rhubarb (page 1733).

But there is another point I want cleared up about the ownership of words: Is it permanent? There was a period some years ago during which the chances were that I should describe most things as *Disingenuous*. At that time, I take it, *Disingenuous* was a word especially mine. I no longer do this, although in the interval even more things and people have come to seem to me *disingenuous*; so has my tenancy lapsed? If I had happened to open the dictionary at page 527 of Volume One, should I have been able, let alone willing, to lay claim to the word *Disingenuous*? I would as soon have had *Disinhume* (six inches further up, in the third column).

As a general thing I am inclined to distrust these tests that depend on "opening at random." A few years ago there was a lot of talk about what was called the "taxi-driver test" for a good novel; I think it was Mr. Wyndham (Tarr) Lewis's idea. He contended, so far as I remember, that the distinction or otherwise of a book should be immediately recognizable to a taxi-driver invited in and shown any page of it. I never heard any account of such an actual experiment, but one can see that the result depends entirely on the sort of luck one has with the taxi-driver. There must be quite a number of taxi-drivers who, able to recognize distinction in a page of fiction with which they were suddenly confronted, would refuse to admit it because they felt contrary, or because the tip had been too small, or because they were on their way back to the garage with a piece of perishable lost property.

Similarly in this instance. Any shrinking subject given a dictionary-page and fearful of revealing himself as not a good writer has merely to lay bold claim to half a dozen words chosen at as much random as the page, and I don't imagine that the experimenter would have the nerve to say him nay.

I must admit though that I don't know quite what he would do about page 1732 of the Shorter Oxford. I don't suppose Mr. Stonier would admit the excuse that I happened to light on a preternaturally bad page, or the one that on second thoughts I think I rather like the look of *Rhomb*. The logical conclusion is plain, if we must be logical. Me, I still insist that I chose too discursive a dictionary.

R. M.

Passed By Censor

"Of the European borrowers, one country, Finland, was attacked by Russia; two, Norway and Denmark, have been occupied by Germany, and another, Ireland, is being held by Canadian troops."

New York Paper.

It should be the ambition of every officer to hold in due course the command of a unit in the field; it must, however, be borne constantly in mind that successful leadership depends very largely upon the possession of certain qualities—





Adastral Bodies

"Such Sweet Sorrow"

WE are going away to-day. We stand beside our gleaming new kit-bags, silently, in the cool early-morning street.

"Anyone want to know anythink?" asks the corporal.

This is unusually friendly of him, but then we have been shambling at his heels for the whole of our Air Force career—the entire six days of it. Now we are going to leave him, and he is in holiday mood.

Yet we hesitate for a moment; we have been discouraged from addressing N.C.O.s in sentences of more than two words, and we do not wish to appear forgetful of our manners on our last day. But presently a throat is cleared nervously in the rear rank; Second-class Aircraftman Gunthorpe has decided to take advantage of this unique offer.

"Corporal," says he, his honest face pucker'd a little—"my greatcoat won't go in my kit-bag. How have I got to carry it?"

"In your —— kit-bag," replies the corporal graciously. "Anyone else want to know anythink?"

Nobody does.

With many grunts and staggerings we heave our worldly possessions on to our shoulders and tramp off along the half-forgotten route to the station. As we go we make a mental note to pack our kit-bags with more fore-thought next time, ensuring that the close-wedged angular objects in the centre which are steadily biting their way into our necks are stowed away less haphazardly in future.

To the station, then, and from there

—well, the wide world lies beyond, and none can say for which corner of it we shall be shortly bound. None can say, that is, with any certainty. Rumour and speculation have buzzed amongst us like bees, and such scattered destinations as Blackpool and Dover, Lossiemouth and the Isle of Wight have been named by those with keen deductive or clairvoyant powers. Second-class Aircraftman Purbeck has a friend who is a lance-corporal in the Dorsets and upon whose authority he learns that drafts leaving Somewhere-in-Wales on a Saturday embark inevitably for Northern Ireland. This is sad news for some of us who had fancied being a little nearer home, but the less sentimentally-minded are enthusiastic. There is no rationing in the Emerald Isle, they point out, and the superabundance of dark-eyed colleens is well known; it appears that a further amenity is a delicious beer known as Peat . . .

But let us face the truth: nobody will know where we are going until we get there. Even within the narrow confines of Somewhere-in-Wales we have never known whether we were being marched away to be fed, photographed or shot. One significant clue is the presence of some squarish comestible in our ration-bags. It is laid down in King's Regulations, say the knowledgeable ones, that men on active service must be fed every five hours (or every four, or every six, or every *something*); we breakfasted at six; we have been given rations; a child could deduce, then, that we are to travel many miles to-day.

At the station we are confronted by a galaxy of officials such as we have not yet seen gathered together in one place. There are no officers, of course (we have not seen an officer yet), but there is a Warrant Officer, and we are quite satisfied with him; there are corporals, naturally (there are always corporals), and there are sergeants and more sergeants and—what does that crown mean over the stripes?—great heavens, yes! even flight-sergeants have turned out to help with our send-off.

We stand before the Warrant Officer. He holds sheaves of papers in his hands. He consults with the corporals, the sergeants, the flight-sergeants. They run hither and thither to do his bidding. Our train must be almost due now, for it is plain that there is not a moment to be lost. The Warrant Officer pivots swiftly on his heel and points in this direction or in that. We stand before him. The minutes drag by . . . we have been here half an hour . . . an hour . . .

Around us the town begins to awaken. Civilians appear in the street and cross the station yard without looking at us. To them we seem just the same as the assembly that stood here yesterday morning, and the morning before, and the morning before that. Beyond us, in the station, trains come and go; with each whistle, each clang of the signal-bell, comes the thought that this must be our train, and that the Warrant Officer and his satellites will have to get us into it in double-quick time. But every train goes out again, the Warrant Officer consults his papers, points here and there, sends the corporals running.

We stand before him, the climbing sun increasingly warm upon our faces. The shops are open now, the morning papers are being delivered. Our feet hurt us as we squirm stealthily in our stiff new boots. It seems that we cannot be going away after all; our deductions have been even wider of the mark than we dreamed of. This is just an exercise in patience, no doubt; we shall go on standing here all morning, and then—

"One - six - one - nine - two - oh - seven Abbott!"

It is the Warrant Officer's voice, only slightly raised. There is one fifth of a second's hush; then the morning air is hideous with the cries of a myriad corporals, sergeants, flight-sergeants, addressing Second-class Aircraftman Abbott in angry terms. They wish Second-class Aircraftman Abbott to "Shout up, there!" to "Yell out 'Sir!'" to "Shout up and step smartly forward!" They inquire whether

Second-class Aircraftman Abbott is dumb, deaf, daft, present or absent; whether he knows his own name and number, and if so, what in the name of Hades does he mean by not shouting up and stepping smartly forward; does Second-class Aircraftman Abbott imagine that the Warrant Officer is calling his name because he likes the sound of it, or for the benefit of his, the Warrant Officer's, health, or because he makes a hobby of calling out names and numbers at nine o'clock on a Saturday morning? They remind Second-class Aircraftman Abbott that he is in the Air Force now, not back at home having breakfast in bed, and they conclude their observations by saying that the next man not answering his name and stepping smartly forward will be Put on a Charge. Then they fall silent, the corporals, the sergeants, the flight-sergeants; they relax and lean against the booking-office, taking up their private conversations where they left off.

There are about two hundred of us. Many trains have run under the bridges before we have all shouted up and stepped smartly forward. Our breakfasts are forgotten, and we finger our ration-bags tentatively. We continue to stand before the Warrant Officer, three paces removed from where we were standing before. Somewhere in the distance a clock strikes ten.

Suddenly, with an urgency which suggests that the whole course of the war depends upon our moving like lightning, we are attacked by a strong force of N.C.O.s and herded through the barrier on to the station; the air is filled with vigorous injunctions not to go to sleep on our feet; we are pushed from behind and from either flank; we tread on each other's boots and fight like wild things for positions of vantage near the platform's edge. A train is coming in, drawing to a standstill; it is a goods train, empty, and we smile stoically, recalling the old joke about forty men or eight horses. We wait for the word of command, but none is forthcoming. The Warrant Officer and the N.C.O.s are laughing together by the bookstall. Can it be that they have not noticed the arrival of our train? Ought we to attract their attention? We begin to discuss the thing anxiously; the train starts to pull out again without us, and our chattering swells in volume. "Quiet, there!" bawls a corporal absently. Soon the track before us is empty again. One of us collapses unrebuked upon his kit-bag, and the rest of us follow his example. There is nothing like being in plenty of time,

we mutter to each other, when there is a train to catch . . . if there is a train to catch. We begin to wonder . . .

"One-six-one-nine-two-oh-seven Abbott!"

A passenger train, about the forty-second, is drawing in. Second-class Aircraftman Abbott, roused from a trance of relaxation by the voice from the bookstall, springs up fearfully, entangles a foot in the cord of his kit-bag, falls down again and is struggling to free himself when pandemonium breaks loose amongst the N.C.O.s. Does Second-class Aircraftman Abbott think he has been brought to the station to sleep all morning on the — platform? Does not Second-class Aircraftman Abbott know a train when he sees one? Has he never been in a train before? Has he forgotten his name and number already? Does he want to be Put on a Charge? He is in the Air Force now, remember, not dishing out the swill to the pigs back home! If Second-class Aircraftman Abbott does not shortly show a little gumption he will be this, he will be that, he will be the other . . . and that goes for the rest of you, too, you dim-witted, pop-eyed sons of so-and-so's . . .

We grin at each other. We grin at Second-class Aircraftman Abbott, whose only crime is to come too near the beginning of the alphabet. He doesn't mind; nobody minds. This is the new life, shouting up and stepping smartly forward, being bawled at by

two stripes and screamed at by three—and still we only grin at each other.

Later, much later, as the train draws out, blue-uniform-packed from end to end, we even summon up courage to grin at the N.C.O.s.

And they, curious fellows, wag their heads at us and grin amiably back.

• •

To an Author

WHEN I had flu I sat and cried
To think of how your heroine died,
But now I'm up and take the air
I realize I have ceased to care.
My better nature, says my nurse,
Is only better when I'm worse.
To circulate your novel you
Should circulate the germs of flu.

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Announcement

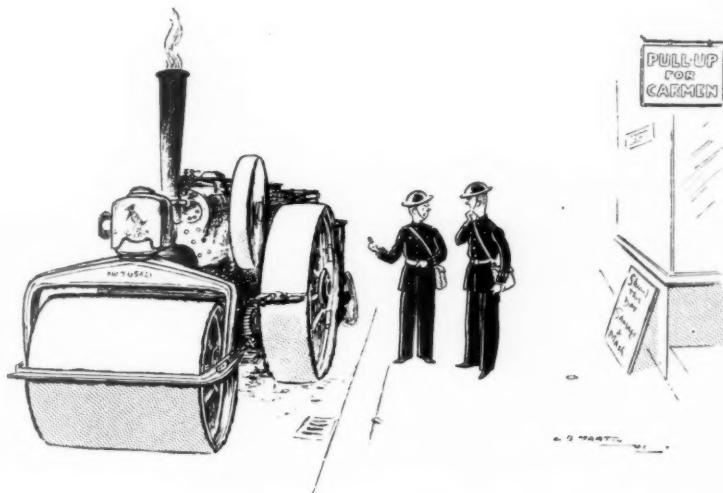
"Members of the Red Cross Penny-a-Week League have now their own monthly publication, 'The Penny-a-Week News,' price twopence."—*The Times*.

• •

"I venture to say that the world would be considerably more drab if we women went around *au naturel*."

Letter in "Daily Sketch."

We venture to disagree.



"The point is, old man, has the driver removed the cylinder-head before going for his sausage-and-mash?"



"Will you knock down a few on us, Mister—we want to pretend they're bombs."

Twenty-four Hours' Leave

COMING through the Beallach Mhor,
I met Macdougall driving sheep;
Said Macdougall, "How's the war?"
I said, "That'll keep;

Tell me, how's the countryside?
Hills and glens there used to be,
High and low and far and wide;
Will they wait for me?

When this war has had its fill,
Will the grouse be on the muir?
Will the trout be at the mill?
Tell me, tell me sure,

Will the salmon hold the Leaps?
Will the eagles keep the crag?
Shall I, in the corrie deeps,
See again a stag?

Gun and game-bag, rod and cast,
Climbing-boots and camping-pack—

God knows when I saw them last;
Shall I get them back? . . .

Nights when I am far from here,
Strong and swift the terror springs
Lest my loves should disappear—
Like so many things,

Many things and many men
War has battered 'neath his boots.
Will the Old Times come again?" . . .
Said Macdougall, "Hoots!

War'll finish, never fear,
War an' muckle else beside;
Burns o' trout an' hills o' deer
An' summer skies 'll bide—

Bide till a' the Huns is beat,
The boys is back an' folks is free;
An' me an' you'll be here t' see 't—
An' what for no'?" said he.

H. B.



THE HOUR OF NEED

Impressions of Parliament

Business Done

Tuesday, September 30th.—House of Lords: A Debate on Food.

House of Commons: Another Chapter in W. S. Churchill's History of the Great War.

Wednesday, October 1st.—House of Commons: Much Gold Flows.

Thursday, October 2nd.—House of Commons: Debate on Food.

Tuesday, September 30th.—Never, surely, even in the days of their "penny-blood"-reading youth, did any body of representative Britisher await so eagerly the next instalment of a tale as our legislators wait for the PRIME MINISTER's next chapter of the History of the Great War.

And never did an author take more obvious pleasure in the telling than does Mr. CHURCHILL.

So the House of Commons assembled with something of the expectant air of a nursery full of highly-interested listeners. And they were not disappointed.



THE PROMISED LAND

"We are marching . . . steadily forward towards the final goal, which, though distant, can already be plainly seen."—*Mr. Churchill*.

Except in Russia, little seemed to have happened in the world-wide battlefields since last he addressed the House. But with a few deft strokes of his pen he showed that, in this war as in the last, the phrase "All Quiet on the Western Front"—or its modern

synonym—can cover a great deal of thrill and action.

Mr. ALEXANDER, First Lord of the Admiralty, provided a curtain-raiser consisting of a brief matter-of-fact statement to the effect that the Navy had got rid of thirteen Italian warplanes which had "shadowed" a very important British convoy passing through the Mediterranean. He added, with a certain dry humour, that a squadron of the Italian Fleet had been reported to be at sea, but that they had taken "evading action" and had not been brought to battle.

Then the House went into committee to deal with the first formalities of granting the Government another £1,000,000,000 to pay for a few days of the war. Mr. CHURCHILL rose and went alertly to the table, a sheaf of notes in his hand.

Straight into the story he plunged, with a revelation that we had, in the last three months, sunk one and a half times as much enemy shipping as we had in the preceding three. The enemy had, on the other hand, sunk only one-third of the Allied tonnage they had put down to the sea-bottom three months earlier.

So we could give ourselves more rations, and a more sumptuous Christmas dinner this time with greater justification than ever before. Members, being human, gave this announcement a special cheer.

Mr. CHURCHILL, having impressed on the House the need to guard against too much optimism (complacency is the overworked word of the moment), asked leave to "make a statement of a somewhat encouraging nature." It was that we are no longer alone. On the one side the U.S.A., on the other the U.S.S.R., gave us invaluable aid and encouragement. And we labour forward now to the goal of Victory, which, though far distant, can clearly be seen.

The PRIME MINISTER then got to the point around which he had been hovering tentatively throughout his speech—a plea for what he, in his Back-Bench days, would doubtless have called "Bigger and Better Secrecy" about the war.

To an accompaniment of extremely moderate enthusiasm he proceeded to build up a case for keeping the war quiet, so far as the public—including Parliament—are concerned. HITLER, said he, was capable of hitting East and West at the same time, and that should be borne in mind when too much optimism made itself a nuisance.

"Premier STALIN" was asking for a great deal in the way of supplies, and we were prepared to send him all

he wanted, even at great sacrifice to ourselves.

He delivered a swinging uppercut at Sir WALTER CITRINE, Trade Union Congress chief, who had been in conflict with Labour Minister ERNEST BEVIN about the claims of the Army to the man-power Sir WALTER thought



AN ASTRONOMICAL FIGURE

"We are on the eve of seeing the gross total of small war savings reach the notable landmark of £1,000,000,000."

The Chancellor of the Exchequer.

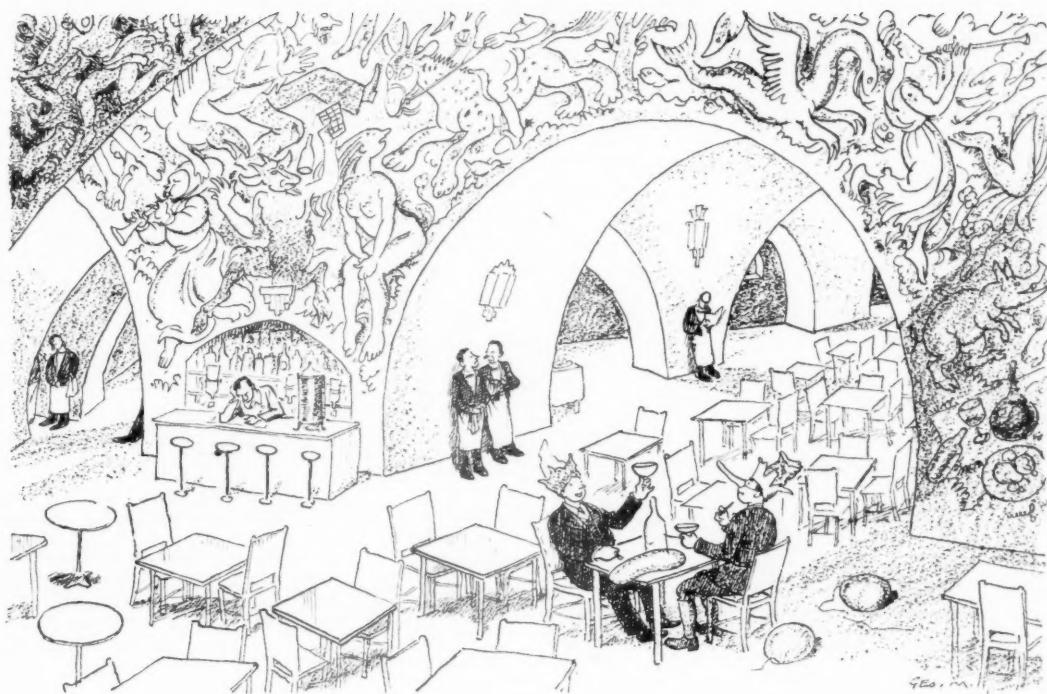
industry should retain for its own war effort.

You could not carry on a war on the dangerously temperamental basis of a Gallup Poll. Nor, added Mr. CHURCHILL, unable any longer to keep up the unusually serious tone he was then using, could the nation be expected to *look up* to leaders who adopted the ungainly posture advocated by so many of their critics—"keeping their ears to the ground."

This "crack" was the big success of the speech.

We should bomb Rome when it suited us, Mr. CHURCHILL declared, dealing with his critics *seriatim*, and the Persian situation had been handled with great skill. In Persia (the PREMIER glanced defiantly at the purists who seemed on the verge of muttering "Iran") we had cleaned up a difficult situation with little or no bloodshed, sent the dictator flying, and would soon have an honourable alliance with that country.

He would offer no flattering promises that the future would be bright or cheerful. In the spring very heavy



"I always like coming here on a gala night."

fighting would develop in the East and the threat of invasion of our island would become acute. But we were ready.

There followed a debate with which these pages (like those of History itself) need not trouble.

Before the star speech, Mr. DAI GRENFELL, Secretary for Mines, floundering in his perpetual scalding bath over the shortage of coal, started a brand new volume of his own: "Mr. Punch's Dictionary of Astonishing Admissions." This was his contribution: "It is not my business to disagree with the policy of the Government."

Then Mr. PICKTHORNE asked a question about "more notice being taken of this Uthwatt report than was taken of the last Uthwatt report." Mr. GREENWOOD, looking slightly dazed, murmured "What Uthwatt report?" but the SPEAKER intervened to arrest the further development of what looked like a very promising WILL HAY effect.

Mr. OLIVER LYTTELTON, Minister of State, fresh back from the Middle East, listened to the proceedings from a modest seat on the Treasury Bench.

Wednesday, October 1st.—Few Members bothered to listen to the debate on the trifling sum of £1,000,000,000 for which Sir KINGSLEY Wood, as the National Cashier, asked to-day.

Sir KINGSLEY mentioned, without emotion, that we are now spending some £13,000,000 a day on various aspects of the war—£9,000,000 on the Fighting Services, £2,000,000 on Civil Defence, the rest on social services. The CHANCELLOR contrived to make it sound somewhat like the sums extracted, with infinite care, from a juvenile savings-box with the aid of a knife. But some of his super-tax-paying hearers looked as if they were having the knife jammed into them.

For some reason which was not apparent to your scribe, they failed to show any wild enthusiasm for the CHANCELLOR's (doubtless reassuring) statement that taxation could not go appreciably higher than 19s. 6d. in the pound.

In fact they looked as if they did not put even the feat of extracting blood from a stone beyond the capacity of the Treasury.

The CHANCELLOR emphasized that

the nation must not relax on the Anti-Inflation front.

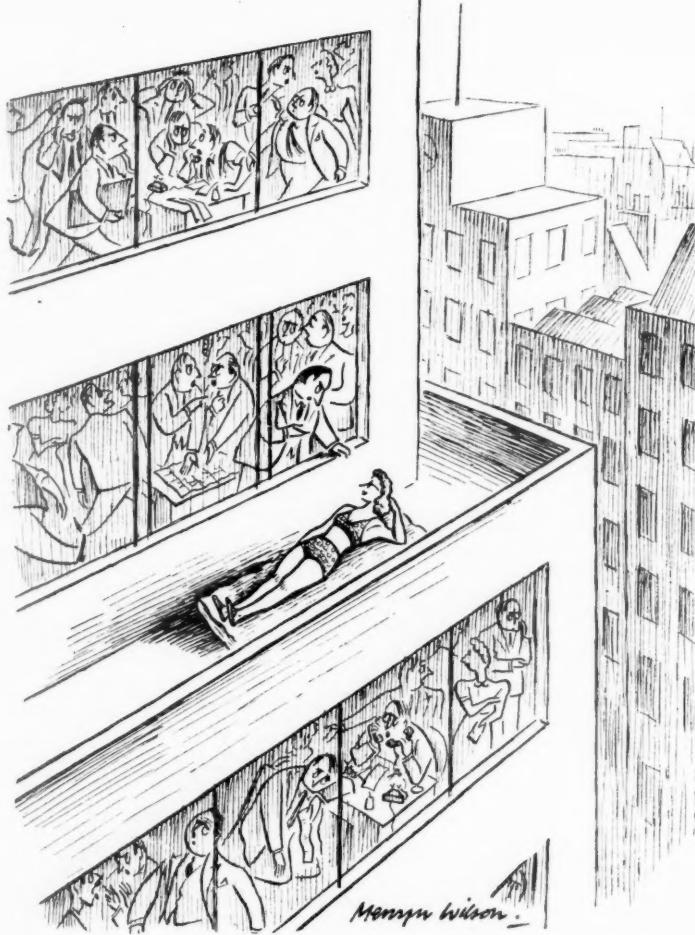
He mentioned, with a kind of nostalgic—or was it sadistic?—relish, that average expenditure in the last war had been a mere £8,000,000 a day. Members sighed for the joys of yesteryear—and authorized the sum asked for.

Major GWILYM LLOYD GEORGE mentioned that 145,000,000 people were getting "three eggs a month"—hastily adding, in reply to startled gasps, that he meant each person got three eggs. Mr. WILL THORNE promised to exercise the function suggested by his name in the sides of vendors of fake food "substitutes." Which all seemed nice and peaceful like.

Thursday, October 2nd.—House of Commons listened without great concentration to promises of more food rations in the coming months: there will be more sugar, meat and fats.

Over in the House of Lords their Lordships listened with the keenest concentration to the sordid details of a murder case on an appeal against the death sentence.

Truly a remarkable place, this Britain.



"Really, Miss Fosdyke, sunbathing at this period of tension!"

T.V.A.'s Nameplates

TO his friends he was always known as T.V.A., but in an educational *Who's Who* he might have been described as:—

“ANDERTON — Thomas Vericott, age 46, educated South Africa and Oxford. Served France, European War, 1917-18. Staff-Captain and mentioned dispatches. Deacon 1923, Priest 1925. From 1926 to 1939 Assistant master St. Jude's School, Trudgett Magna (in charge games and O.T.C.).”

At the end of 1939, however, there would have been something more to add, for after the Michaelmas term

T.V.A. decided to join up again. He applied for, and immediately obtained, an Army Commission. A few days later he was detailed for special duty as an instructor to officer cadets.

But it so happened that during the Christmas holidays following his resignation from St. Jude's, the school buildings of that establishment were requisitioned by the War Department for use as an Officers' Cadet Training Unit. A little wangling, therefore, and he was posted to the very place where he had so recently been a master; a little more and he was installed in his old rooms at the top of the clock tower staircase.

When T.V.A. arrived to take up his new duties his nameplate

REVD. T. V. ANDERTON

still remained on his old study door, a matter which caused him a considerable amount of thought. Should he, he argued with himself, have it removed? Or should he have another put up in its place showing his new Army rank? Or should he—largely for sentimental reasons—let the old nameplate remain, setting up the new one above it?

Eventually he decided on the latter course, with the following result:—

CAPT. ANDERTON

REVD. T. V. ANDERTON

This done, T.V.A. settled down to his new job, soon gaining a considerable reputation both as instructor and as a strict disciplinarian.

And then one morning while on parade he had occasion severely to rebuke a couple of cadets. During the usual morning inspection he had found their rifles to be dirty and by way of punishment had ordered the offenders to come up to his study at 9 A.M. the next day with the arms properly cleaned.

On the following morning, therefore, his door being slightly ajar, T.V.A. heard his two visitors slowly mounting the long staircase before finally shuffling to a halt on his door-mat—the same mat on which it had been customary for defaulting members of the school O.T.C. to pause in their various states of trepidation.

But the two cadets seemed to wait a longer time than had been usual in their younger prototypes; so much so that T.V.A. began to wonder what might be amiss.

He was not left very long in doubt, for suddenly the silence was broken by a startled exclamation closely followed by a voice in which consternation and bewilderment were equally blended.

“My suffering aunt!” it said. “Just imagine that fellow having a brother a *parson*.”

G. C. N.

Over-Enthusiasm

“The First Aid treatment for a broken rib is to apply a tight bandage after you have made the patient expire.”

First Aid Exam. Paper.

Meal-time at the Donaltown Arms

THE dining-room at the Donaltown Arms is really two rooms turned into one, so that there are two doors, two windows, two fire-places and about a dozen little tables. On some days the little tables up by the window overlooking the street have table-cloths and spoons and forks and people sitting at them, and the fire is lit down the other end; some days it is the other way round, but the fire is never the same end as the people. The window at the street end is covered with a thick khaki lace curtain and is always left open an inch at the top to let a little fine rain in. If you lift the curtain at one corner you can see a lot of raindrops running down the window, then out past a commercial traveller getting out of a car, past the R.N.V.R. in dark-blue raincoats getting off bicycles, to one of the chief features of the town: a Masonic Lodge built with all the romantic licence of 1910; medium, stucco the colour of French mustard. If you stand on a chair and peer through the little space at the top of the window you can sometimes see right through a blur of rain and a crack between two slate roofs to the sea. At other times you can see some black mud with a smell which settles over the whole town, seeps into the dining-room and lents, Lieutenant Donne says, the full flavour of a health diet to unimaginative cookery.

At the time of the first air-raids you could see the bank manager running along the street in a tin helmet, beating a gong. If it is after black-out time, Flossie the waitress will have pulled some thicker curtains across, and Sub-Lieutenant Cinder, who is doing the Navigation Course at H.M.S. *Dogfish*, will have pulled one of them back so that he can see out to practise a few star sights. If you look through either door at any time of day you will most likely see Mrs. McTeviot the proprietress sweeping the passage in a hair-net.

Quite a good way of telling what meal you were having, in most households, used to be by looking at what was on the table. For instance, if you saw marmalade and *The Times* you could tell it was breakfast, and if you saw just marmalade it might be one of those eccentric studio residences where people used to pig along reading any sort of newspaper at any time of day, and eating marmalade only when they felt like it. When there is a *Times* on the table at the Donaltown Arms you can tell it is the day before yesterday's,

and when there is marmalade you can tell it is near the beginning of the month, that Mrs. McTeviot and the grocer have decided to let bygones be bygones, and that everybody likes to see their ration at every meal to make sure nobody else is eating it.

Another thing you can tell is which table is whose, because Lieutenant Donne keeps his marmalade in an old potted meat jar and Sub-Lieutenant Cinder's is in a special dish Flossie found for him, with a pink china bow for a handle. Porridge, bread, scones and oatcakes on the table usually mean that it is breakfast, lunch, dinner, tea, high tea, dinner or supper. Sausages or fish mean high tea or breakfast. Potatoes probably mean lunch, dinner or supper, but have been known to come in for breakfast. No fruit has ever been known to come in for any meal, nor any vegetable except potatoes.

A conversation at a war-time meal is always about food, however it started. At the Donaltown Arms Sub-Lieutenant Cinder will open with some perfectly neutral remark, like "It's going to clear up," not that it ever does, but as a piece of wishful thinking, because if it's fine he has

arranged to go cycling with a girl who lives up the road, and if it's wet he has promised to spend the afternoon in the kitchen with Mrs. McTeviot's youngest boy Sandy, perfecting an invention for a pair of miniature screen-wipers for a gas-mask. Or Lieutenant Donne will begin telling us about the time he walked overboard in all his clothes, up to and including his duffle coat. Or how another time Mrs. McTeviot caught him shivering, sneezing, turning up his coat collar and moving nearer the fire to eat his high tea, and told him severely "Ye'll nob' be a very fine sailor, I'm thinking." But by the time the potatoes have gone out and the scones have come in, Lieutenant Steer of the Royal Canadian N.V.R. is complaining that he didn't come six thousand miles to live off the starch which he guesses any nation but the Scotch would have thought of putting into his collars. And Lieutenant Donne has gone on to describe a mid-morning meal he once had at a railway terminus, which started with grapefruit, porridge, eggs and bacon, coffee, toast, butter and marmalade because he hadn't had any breakfast, went on with cream cake because there happened to be a piece on the table, and finished with thick or clear, steak and kidney, two veg., apple tart and cream, biscuits and cheese because he didn't like to go on sitting there without eating.

I think I have mentioned everything worth mentioning about our dining-room except the pictures and the toasting-fork made out of a stag's antler. The pictures are all etchings of English cathedrals, spaced about a foot apart, and if you go right round the room on a wet afternoon, as Lieutenant Donne did, looking very closely and counting, you will see that six of them are the same view of the same cathedral. The toasting-fork has brass prongs fitted on to three of its branches, so that you could make three bits of toast all at once, if you had a fire-place built in a huge semicircle, but actually it is never used and lives on the sideboard next to the jersey Flossie is knitting between courses as a Christmas present for Sub-Lieutenant Cinder.

But now that the R.N.V.R. have filled all the bedrooms at the Donaltown Arms, the chief thing to remember about the dining-room is that it must be cleared by 10 P.M. sharp to give Mrs. McTeviot time to push all the little tables to one side and put up camp beds instead for her commaircials.

WINTER SEAS

THE Battle of the Atlantic finds the Navy and the Merchant Service keeping ceaseless vigil. Their efforts mean food supplies, munitions of war, protection of home, support for Forces overseas, constant watch upon the enemy—all these are dependent upon their selfless service. We shall never be able to repay our debt, but at least we can provide them with the comforts they deserve and make their winter hardships a little more bearable.

Won't you please help us? If this is your first introduction to the Fund will you please become a subscriber?

Donations will be gratefully acknowledged by Mr. Punch at PUNCH COMFORTS FUND, 10 Bouverie St., London, E.C.4.

Wood Fighting

TENSELY, with bated breath, we had watched a party of the enemy as, very warily, they searched the thick and tangled wood for our ambush. Though trees and brambles intervened, we got recognizable glimpses of the seven men and particularly of the bespectacled and cherubic face of their leader, Corporal Higginbottom. We were well hidden and we chuckled silently at the thought of the cherub's rancour when he walked into our trap.

Suddenly we were puzzled by two bright lights, head-high, as if Higginbottom were semaphoring to a party that had worked in behind us. An instant later we saw him drop to the ground, though the bright lights remained. Then the seven men of his party also disappeared downwards. We heard the whispering of orders and the sound of stealthy movement through the thick undergrowth. There were half-smothered oaths as brambles took their toll.

We feared that we were seen and that the attackers were advancing against us on hands and knees. Our advantage was gone. Now we could see nothing and could only judge of increasing danger by the sounds.

But though these sounds continued, they did not seem to come any nearer. There were only the crashing of foliage and the voices of men in pain. And still, very mysteriously, there remained those two small lights overhead.

After twenty minutes, as no attack developed, we sent out a patrol. We watched it until it reached the spot where Corporal Higginbottom and his men had disappeared. Then it too seemed to vanish into the ground. A second patrol was swallowed up in the same manner, just under the two magic lights. Neither party returned to us. But fresh voices seemed to be added to the persistent cries of torment.

Eventually we decided to leave our ambush and investigate in force. Crouching, with bayonets fixed and rifles at the ready, we went forward. In the middle of an almost impenetrable bramble-clump we found Corporal Higginbottom on his knees. He no longer had a rifle. His hands and face were lacerated and bleeding. His look was strained, his eyes were the eyes of one who has lived long in despair.

Remembering that this was war, we were merciless and prodded him with bayonets. Others of our force spread out and rounded up eleven other men

in the same state of misery and exhaustion: among them were four who had once been our friends.

Corporal Higginbottom found fresh cause for anguish in our arrival. "I say, you fellows," he cried, "stop fooling around with those rifles and for goodness' sake mind where you are treading. Just weigh in with the other fellows, won't you, and help us search this undergrowth. Somewhere in the middle of it I've dropped my spectacles."

Moved to compassion, we declared the war at an end. Leaving our rifles against trees, we joined the search, mingling our blood with that of our foes on the bramble-stems. It was not till ten minutes later that one of us, rising painfully to staunch a cut, remembered the two lights that had remained when Corporal Higginbottom's face disappeared. Then we showed him his spectacles, hanging on a tree, with the sunlight glinting on their lenses.

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"Plus Ça Change . . ."

MRS. LAPIN sat on the sack we had filled with R.A.F. socks, to keep it firm while I sewed round the edges with a packing-needle and string. It was a more satisfactory job than the parcels, as by the time we had done, unless it happened to look like a haggis, it would have every appearance of the ones to be seen in goods yards.

"Well," she said, "we women will never put up with the old life after the war. Such little things filled our lives, didn't they? No scope really for intelligent women, in spite of modern advance. Wives will take their place by their husbands in future, not wait for them at home."

"When we go back to——" I began.

"Go back? Go on, you mean, my dear, on—on to the new freedom."

I had to go and fetch some more string, and as the lovely new ball was much too good for sacks, it meant an unravelling a piece from the bit-box.

After the war. . . . What with one thing and another, I hadn't somehow managed to get down to my peace aims.

The black-out would be the first thing. I would draw back the curtains as far as they would go, and regardless of bats, moths, and the hard red insects which used to bang so alarmingly about the room, let in that lavish blue light you can only see when the lamps are lit. The passers-by should have a treat if they liked looking in at other people's houses as much as I did.

Passers-by! Indeed, they'd be there again to disturb us with their footsteps. And the buses could screech and the taxis blare their horns at will.

A strapping parlourmaid of the 1920 Age Group would come in and take away the tea-things—the cream, the jam, the hot buttered toast I hadn't eaten. The children should be allowed to ruin the fire by burning paper in it—the nice thick expensive kind the best letters are written on, and on the hearth-rug would be a round wooden box of Turkish Delight. Thrusting an American silk stockinged foot into a useless mule, and gathering in one hand an unpractical house-coat, I would hurry for the drinks, for the front door bell might mean an early influx from the City. French and Italian vermouth, there'd be sure to be enough gin left, and I could cut up a couple of lemons. . . .

But my thoughts had become retrogressive, not reconstructing the new world. Hastily threading the needle, I returned to Mrs. Lapin and the sack, and began sewing on the label in the natty criss-cross way we had discovered.

"Nothing will be the same," she went on. "And I am sure our husbands will respect us all the more for it."

"I can tell you one thing which will be different," I said briskly, for I was feeling rather guilty—"undoing parcels will have lost its charm."

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Filing

I AM working in our Company Office owing to my name beginning with Co and the only Ce in the Company having got made into an ordinary Sapper again for getting behindhand with the filing. The As, Bs, and Cs were used up and sacked long ago.

"Filing is quite simple," said the Orderly Corporal, "if you do it every day. Of course we haven't got the facilities that you would find in a civvy office, but I flatter myself that the system I have devised is foolproof. Command Orders go into the box labelled 'Corn Flakes,' Group Orders go into the box labelled 'Best Mixed Fruits,' letters from Ordnance go into the wooden box with the Chinese hieroglyphics on it . . ."

He continued the list until my head whirled, and when he had done I said respectfully, "Wouldn't it be safer to label the boxes and things properly so that I didn't have to remember which was which?"

"It might," he said, "but actually we have no right to use these cartons and boxes at all. As part of the anti-waste campaign they are supposed to be returned to the R.A.S.C., and when we move camp they will be. So they can't be defaced in any way."

I might have argued further, but the Orderly Corporal was glancing at the Company Roll in an irritable sort of way, as though looking to see if there were any sappers whose names began with Cu, so I just set to work on the pile of unfiled papers left by my predecessor. It was a long job, because I kept taking down the wrong files, and there were a lot of papers that didn't seem to belong anywhere.

"This one from a lady offering her grandfather's sea-boots to one of the men as she has been so upset to see them wallowing in the mud," I said— "which file does it go in?"

"Use your initiative," said the Orderly Corporal. "I might as well do the job myself if you are going to badger me with questions. You men are all the same. The letter came last March, and nobody has ever decided where it ought to go. You have a chance to distinguish yourself. If Captain Crypt finds that letter filed away next time he inspects the office I shouldn't be surprised if you got the job permanently."

I pondered for a bit, and then put it on one side. I toiled all afternoon and evening with the rest of the stuff, and at last it was all stowed away, except that one wretched letter.

I was still looking at it, by the light of a candle, when Lieutenant Vague came in.

"Got a match?" he asked.

I had not. Then, in a moment of devilry, I folded the sea-boots letter into a spill, lighted it at the candle, and gave it to Lieutenant Vague.

"Thanks," he said. "By the way, the vicar here has very kindly placed his stream at my disposal. I've got my rods here and some flies, but I've no boots. The O.C. told me that a few months ago a lady wrote . . ."

I understand that Sapper Culverwell is doing very nicely in Company Office, but I tell my friends that it wasn't much of a job anyway.

• • •

"An American journalist, speaking for the Ministry of Information, addressed a Falmouth audience on Wednesday of last week and predicted that America would be in the war soon. He was Mr. Bruce Thomas, of California, whose descendants were natives of Helston and who left England for America 300 years ago."—*Cornish Paper*.

Probably his interpretation of "soon" is a bit different from ours.

An Artist's War-Time Prayer

THERE are so many pairs of colours, Lord, I love—
White geese against green fields,
And bronze chrysanthemums
In pewter pots . . .
Windfalls of orchard cherries through
the grass,
And drifts of blue forgetmenots
In bowls of brass . . .
Stonecrop, a golden glow
Beside some old brick path,
Or fir-trees in the snow.
And veitchii, too,
In crimson dress
Climbing the white-washed wall . . .

Or cups of royal blue
Set on some plain oak press . . .
Or leather-covered books
(Laid down as if just read)
On soft black velvet chairs . . .

Yet all these pairs,
And all without an ache,
I'd now subordinate
To one thick chateaubriand steak
On any coloured plate.

And, Lord, I do entreat,
Make it as much—or more than—I
can eat.

G. C. N.



A Prussian Lady's farewell to her Mink

Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

The Principles and Practice of Medicine

MR. HARVEY CUSHING's already much-acclaimed biography—*The Life of Sir William Osler* (OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS, 21/-)—has been made available for the wider public it deserves. It is a work in the strictly chronological manner and, now framed in one portentous volume, is as massively impressive as Sir WILLIAM's own famous text-book, as versatile as his pursuits, as faithful to the complete unravelling of every thread of interest once aroused as his loyalty in his innumerable friendships. From a very great bulk of narrative and letters there emerges the portrait of the slight man of swarthy complexion (SARGENT called it olive-green) who more perhaps than any other in a hundred years has forwarded the teaching of medicine and the rational treatment of disease. He was never quite in the front rank of experimental scientists, though always somewhere near and in touch with the leaders; it is said of him that his lifelong habit of really looking at things—preferably through a microscope—would have made him famous in pure research had he not preferred to be a supreme clinician. He was a pioneer of the public hygiene that has gone far to stamp out enteric and of the home sanitation that combats tuberculosis, and the power of his influence throughout a long life against the fetish of drugs, against loud-mouthed or smooth-voiced pronouncements, against all the apparatus of charlatany, is universally

acknowledged. His claim that once he threw a cricket-ball 115 yards is less well established. His progress from Montreal to Philadelphia and Baltimore was marked by endless learned lectures before learned audiences and by a constantly ripening love for the transcendental aspects of his profession. He came home inevitably at last to Oxford and there added to his other absorptions a passion for medical incunabula. During his last illness—and he much regretted not being able to make a final examination of his own bronchia—his choice of bedside literature included Walter Pater, Sir Thomas Browne, Gaston de Latour, Plato, Matthew Arnold and Kipling. The selection depicts the man. His biographer, swinging easily from the grim technicalities of autopsy to horse-play with colleagues and back to the lecture-theatre, has the whole story—perhaps even a little more.

Before the Mast

MR. CHARLES NORDHOFF, part-author of several popular tales of sea adventure, notably *Mutiny on the Bounty*, has edited and compressed for republication the nautical memoirs of the grandfather from whom he has inherited both his name and—presumably—his taste for salt water. The title, *I Served in Windjammers* (CHAPMAN AND HALL, 15/-), is one at which one need not be too much of a purist to cavil. The term "windjammer" was in all likelihood unknown in the days of CHARLES NORDHOFF *grandpère*, and it was in fact probably a word coined by steam-boatmen in a mood of pitying contempt. But that, after all, is no great matter. The book itself is a most interesting and readable account of the life of a seaman in the United States Navy in the days of the wooden walls, and later in a South Sea whaler sailing out of New Bedford; the same phases of life which provided HERMAN MELVILLE with the substance of *White-Jacket* and the far more famous *Moby-Dick*. The author is of course no MELVILLE in other ways. He writes a straightforward and unadorned story of his adventures, which, especially so far as his naval experiences are concerned, are very much like those of a British sailor of the same period, even to the curious popularity of the game "Priest of the Parish." It is perhaps rather to be regretted that the editor has preferred to republish the whaling part of the book rather than that relating to life in the California clippers; the whaler, for some reason, has been more written about than any other kind of ship that sailed.

Squarson's Dilemma

So much water has flowed so swiftly under so many bridges while Mr. H. ANNESLEY VACHELL was presumably writing *Black Squire* (HUTCHINSON, 9/6) that his bright young things are already a little tarnished and their outmoded elders have mostly joined forces with a sterling new edition of youth. This is, at any rate, a comfortable way of facing the impossible tangle of conduct with which this interesting problem-novel is concerned. A poor parson becomes a rich one. *Ambrose Briavel* and his family—which has paid not only in poverty but, rather superfluously, in refinement for their father's asceticism—inherit ample means and a charming country house. The five *Briavel* children and their mother are largely unbroken to the paternal Christianity; and the latter is so accustomed to her rôle of grey mare in the ramshackle shafts of an impossible ménage that her authoritarian manner is as pardonable as her craving for clothes and amusements. The aberrations of the enriched *Briavels* culminate in at least two distressing love-affairs, during which *Ambrose* the priest, assisting at the Nemesis of *Ambrose* the husband



"I understand, Sir, that owing to some unfortunate error, you've consumed TWO portions of a dish marked with an asterisk."



Orderly Sergeant (who after dark has mistaken a barn full of sheep for his Company's billet). "NOW DON'T LET ME HAVE SO MUCH MOVING ABOUT WHEN I'M READING BATTALION ORDERS."

G. Dennis, October 13th, 1915

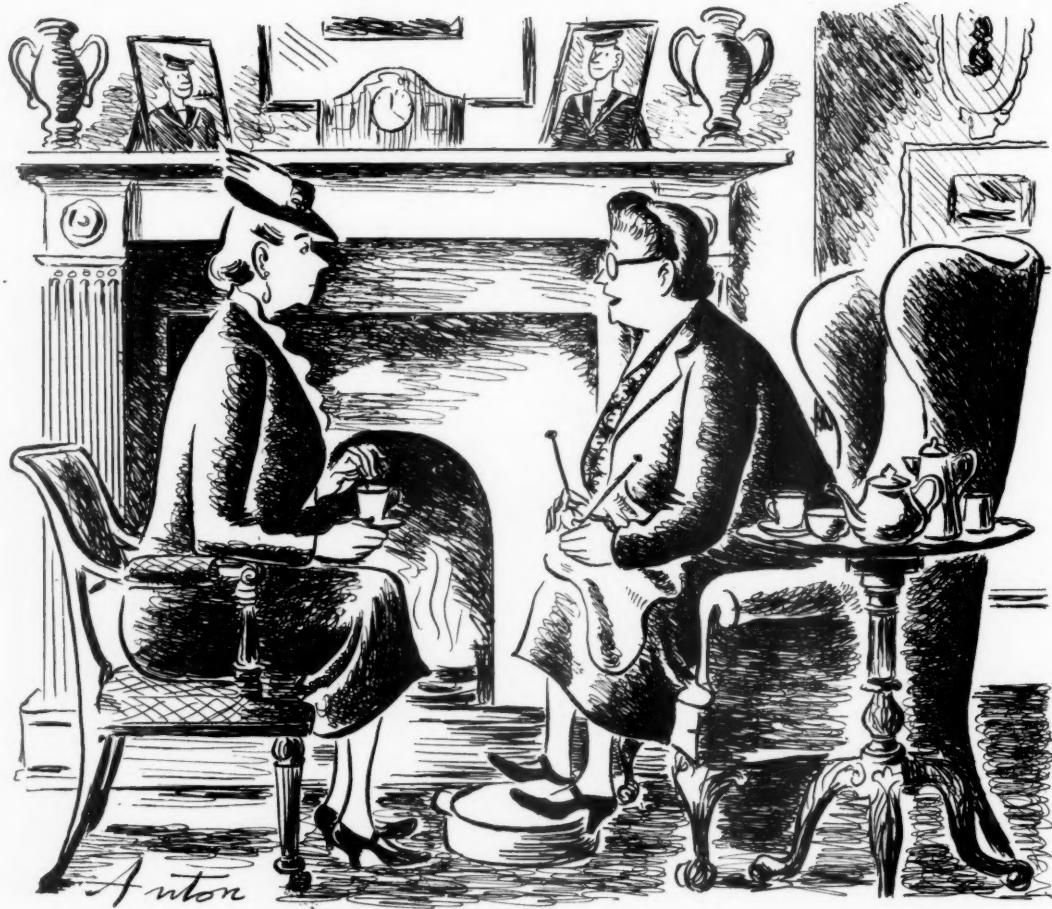
and father, continues to administer consolation and advice to the family for whose moral haziness he is so largely responsible.

Red Lips and Red Tape

Mr. GEORGE A. BIRMINGHAM has drawn the caricature of a Civil Servant as "hero" for his latest novel, *The Search for Susie* (METHUEN, 7/6), and lets this useless, nervous, lazy official (whose job is connected with the internment of enemy aliens) tell the story in his own consequential way. A beautiful girl, who was, most conveniently, a friend besides being an anti-Nazi Austrian baroness, was "wanted" by another Government Department, and the search for her led him into air-raid shelters, dress-shops and nearly into the hands of the police. He is not the only caricature: no butler-cum-A.R.P. warden was ever so efficient as *Jeff*, no

general's widow so fiercely unconventional as *Lady Appleby*, no Irish maid so Irish and no Government officials such fools. In fact once again Mr. BIRMINGHAM has given us the light farcical entertainment for which he has long been famous.

The articles that appeared in these pages under the general heading of *Home Guard Goings-On* have now been reprinted by ALLEN AND UNWIN in a book with that title, price 5/-. The author, Mr. BASIL BOOTHROYD, says that if the note is gay rather than grim it is because he has "preferred the chaff to the wheat," but the wheat is there too, for those who look for it. Another little book of particular interest to our readers is Mr. A. P. HERBERT'S *Let Us Be Glum* (METHUEN, 3/6), wherein his verses from *Punch* and elsewhere, including his famous Easter "postscript," are collected in chronological order from September 1940.



"My son's been in the Navy over a year and he's been stationed at the G.P.O., London, the whole time."

I Catch a Berguler

(By Smith Minor)

THIS isn't going to be about the war, which may put the gentle reader off when he or she finds out, but Green says not, in fact it was him made me decide to risk it.

"I've been noticing your articles," he said to me l'autre jours*, "and quite apart from their being rotten it seems to me you write about the war too much, sometimes people want to forget it."

"How can they forget it," I said, "with the news at 7, 8, 1, 6, 9 and 12?"

"They needn't listen," he said.

"No, but they do," I said. "There's nothing else."

"There's lots," he said.

"Well, what?" I said.

"Do earwigs fall in love," he said.

"I don't know," I said.

"I wasn't asking you," he said, "I was moshioning something else."

"Oh, I see," I said, "but don't be silly, what do you suppose would happen if I sent an article to *Punch* about earwigs falling in love?"

"What?" he said.

"They'd send it back," I said.

"I don't believe they would," he said, "they'd want to know."

"What?" I said.

"If earwigs fall in love," he said.

"But how could I tell them if I don't know?" I said.*

"All right," he said, "then why do goldfish come up to the top and gasp?"

"It isn't to breathe," I said, "they can do that at the bottom."

"Then why is it?" he said.

"I expect they don't know it's the top till they get there," I said, "and then they gasp, like we do in the sea, and go down again."

*French for "the other day." Author.

*I've looked it up since, and they do. Author.

"I'm sure that isn't true," he said, "but it's interesting, and it isn't about the war, so now you see what I mean."

"I do," I said.

Jest the same, I can't help fealing that the gentel reader wuold not want me to write about earwigs or goldfish, thuough white mice might be different, so anyhow I've desided to write about a berguler I once caught, honestly, it's a fact, and after all, even if you don't like it jest look at all the other things there are in *Punch*, you won't have waisted your money. And there's one thing I can promise you, the begining's exciting, whatever you may think of the end.

If you're wondering when I'm going to start after all this, well, I'm going to start now.

It was in the dead of night, and I was dreaming I was the hump of a camel, it was awful, when, lo! I woke up. Now, I dare say you have notised it, you can wake up in two ways, i.e.:

- (1) Something wakes you, or
- (2) You jest wake.

Well, this was "(1)," you can always tell, so the question was, what had woken me?

At first I thort it was a branche against a window, we have one, and when the wind blows it scrapes against the glass, making a noise like, well, a branche against a window, wich don't forget can be bad enoufh at 3 A.M., wich it was. But then I thort, No, it isn't, becouse thuough sometimes the branche scrapes like a pencil on a slate (that's what I was going to say before, only I cuoldn't think of it then), it never makes a sound like seven teapots being droped, and that's what I heard now! "My hat," I thort, "I believe it's a berguler!"

Well, now the question wasn't what had woken me, but what to do about it, and there were three things, i.e.:

- (1) To pretend I hadn't heard and try to go to sleep again,
- (2) To know I'd heard, and to stay where I was, or
- (3) To know I'd heard, and get up.

Wich wuold the gentel reader have done? He or she knows, but of corse I don't, I only know what I did, wich was the whole lot, in the order menshuned. When I tried "(1)" it was no good, becouse I cuoldn't go to sleep again, espeshully after hearing another sound like twenty-five milk-jugs, and when I tried "(2)" it was no good, becouse I kept on thinking of things like, "Do you call yourself English?" and so at last I had to try "(3)" thuough I didn't realy feal that was going to be any good, eighther. In fact,

to be honest, I still didn't feal English, but

"Showed the state of my alarms
By wobbelings in my pyjarms."

(NOTE. The above is by Green. Of corse, I pay him for them, not much, but a little. End of note.)

Of corse one has often thort of catching a berguler, I expeckt you have, and in my thort it goes like this, i.e.:

Berguler: "Ah!"

Me: "Hands up!"

Berguler: "Spair me, mister."

Me: "Will you promise never to berge again if I do?"

Berguler: "I swear it on my othe."

Me: "Then go."

But wuold it be like that now? Well, one wuold soon know!

Unforchunately there wasn't a poker in my room, it having got so short and twisted by being left in the fire that came the day when there wasn't enoufh left of it to use, but there were still the tongues, so I took these, hoping for the best, *comment dire*. They were better than nothing, and might be useful in getting hold of his face.

And now the gentel reader must pickture his or her auther leaving his or her room and not only creaping to the top of the stares but down them, and if he or she has never done this him or her self, he or she does not know what it is like.

(NOTE. If I menshun the gentel reader any more in this article, wich I don't think I will, I think I had better stick to one gender to save time, tossing up to be fair. End of note.)

Well, anyhow, when I had got about half way down the stares, hopeing I wuoldn't hear any more noises wich might mean the berguler had gone, thuough mind you it mightn't, I heard something wich, thuough of corse I didn't like it, made me feal a bit better becouse it was what you might call nacherel. I mean if it had been

- (1) a shreik,
- (2) a gurgle, or,
- (3) blood driping

I might of turned round and gone back again, who can say, you only know what you do do, not what you might, but no! It was a sneaze!

It came from the dining-room, so I began to walk towards the drawing-room, at least my legs did, if you kno what I mean, but then I thort, "No!" and turned round, and closing my eyes I began to walk towards the dining-room, and when I opened my eyes, lo! I was in the dining-room, and so was the berguler, and I thort, "This is where I wake up," like you do, only I didn't.

He didn't look a bit like I'd thort he wuold, he wasn't wearing a black masque or anything and he was quite small, but of corse you can't take chances, so I made the face I always make before a fight and said,

"Hands up!"

I didn't think it wuold be any good, but I cuoldn't think of anything else. He seamed surprised.

"You'd better," I said.

"Oh, 'ad I?" he said.

His voice was weazy, as if he'd swallowed a leamon the wrong way.

"You bet you had," I said.

"Wottle yer do if I don't?" he said.

"You'll see," I said.

"Orl rite, wottle yer do if I do?" he said.

"You'll see that too," I said.

"P'raps you'll see," he said, and then he went on, "Now look 'ere, young feller, put them silly tongues darn. I don't want ter 'urt yer, yer too small."

"Come to that, you're a bit small yourself," I said.

"Well, I'm blowed," he said, "I'm bigger'n you are."

"One grants that," I said, "but one can't always go by size. There's a boy at my school who's smaller than me who once beat a boy who was bigger than you. Mind you, I'm not saying I cuold beat you, not even with these tongues, but I might, you never know."

"Lummy, you've got some pluck," he said.

"Oh, I don't know," I said.

"Yer orter be shakin' in yer shoes," he said.

"I am," I said.

"Go on," he said.

"Well, not a lot," I said, "but a bit."

"This beats me," he said, thuough I cuoldn't see why it shuold of, "you comin' darn like this without nobody else. Ain't there nobody else?"

Then I saw what he meant.

"You mean, why aren't I shouting for help," I said. "Well, there are two reasons. (1) There's a woman in the house who's ill, and I don't want to frighten her, and (2) I don't want to make you go to prison."

"If you ain't a cawtion," he said. "Why not?"

"How do I know you're not doing this for a mother?" I said.

"I am," he said.

"I felt you were," I said.

"And five little brothers and sisters," he said.

"There you are," I said. "So can we do a deal? I've got two shillings and threepence, it may not be much, but if you'll take that an go I promise not to shout."

He came a bit nearer and looked at

me in a way people do sometimes when they wonder if I'm off my nut, making me wonder, too, one's got to admit it's possible. Anyhow he then said,

"You told me you weren't going to shout any'ow becouse someone was ill."

"I forgot that," I said.

"So where are we?" he said.

"I'm not sure," I said. "But suppose I made it three and threepence, a boy owes me a shilling for some tadpoles and he's going to pay me to-morrow, I could send it on if you'd leave me your address."

"In a minit I'll cry," he said.

"Oh, please don't," I said.

I realy thort he was going to, but it came out a sneaze.

"You seam to have a bad cold," I said.

"Wot you seam to 'ave there ain't a nime for," he said.

"What do you mean?" I said.

"Yer wuoldn't unnerstand if I told yer," he said.

So I still don't know.

I don't know how long we'd have gone on like this, it might have been for ever, if something hadn't hapened then that, to burst into French again for a momint, changer toutes. We heard a slow tred outside the window, whch was open. Of cors, that was how he had got in.

"Lummy," he said, "that's done it!"

"It mightn't," I said.

"Think I can't smell a bobby?" he said.

"I can't smell him," I said, "but if it is I think I know what to do."

"Yes, now you'll 'ave ter send me ter prison," he said.

"Don't be silly," I said, "one dosen't go back on one's word."

Then I told him to crowch behind an armchair, whch he did wile I walked to the window, and when I got there, so did the policeman's head, it was in the front garden, of cors not only the head.

"Hallo," said the policeman.

"Hallo," I said.

"This window's open," he said.

"I know," I said. "I was jest going to close it."

"Any trubble?" he said.

"You bet," I said.

"What's the trubble?" he said.

"The cat," I said.

"What about the cat?" he said.

"I had to put it out," I said.

"Why?" he said.

"Well, one does," I said.

"I didn't see it," he said.

"You wuoldn't," I said.

"Why not?" he said.

"Becorse I took it in again," I said.

"Oh," he said.

He didn't seam to know if to believe me, thuong I don't know why he shuoldn't of, and then all of a sudden there came a mee-ow from behind the armchair, and I farely swetted.

"Was that the cat?" he said.

"Well, it wasn't an allergater," I said.

"It sounded almost as much like one," he said.

"Even if it did," I said, "who'd keap an allergater? Good-night."

And then I closed the window and pulled down the blind.

The policeman didn't go at once, he seemed to be thinking, but at last he

went, and I told the berguler he cuold come out.

"Lummy, you was smart," he said.

"So were you," I said.

"It ain't the fust time I've bin a eat," he said.

"You mean you're a cat berguler?" I said.

"If you like," he said, "but now wot?"

"Well, now I must go up and get the money," I said. "Don't go till I come back."

But before I cuold leave the room he got between me and the door.

"Look here," he said, "are you barlmy?"

"Some people think so," I said.

"Well, I'm one of the people," he said, "only you've mide me barlmy, too. Do yer think I'd like yer money?"

"Well, perhaps not for yourself," I said, "but for your mother."

"I ain't got a mother," he said.

"I felt perhaps you hadn't," I said.

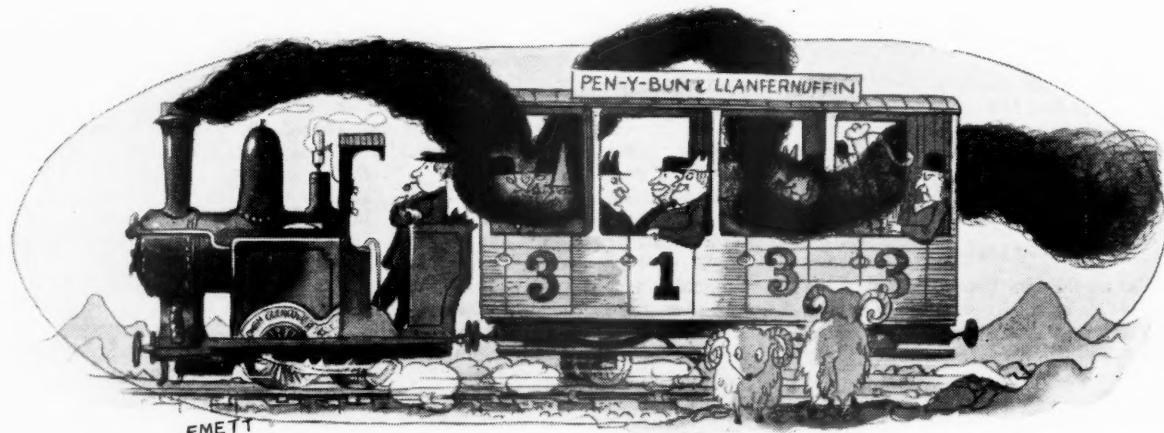
Then I went upstairs and got the money, but when I came down again he'd gone and had left six silver spoons on the table.

Mind you, I may be barlmy, but even if I hadn't been cuold it all have ended better, no one hurt, nothing stolen, no one in prison, and me still having my two shillings and threepence, and dosen't it prove that

"Crooks won't hurt you if you can
But talk to them like man to man"?

Anyhow, I think so.

If the policeman reads this artickle, I hope he won't mind.



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